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DEPT FOR OIIP, AF/PDPA: KMOSELEY AND JSCHAMING
DEPT ALSO FOR IIP/G/AF, AF/W AOKEDIJI

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KPAO](#) [SL](#)
SUBJECT: FREETOWN MEDIA PLACEMENTS FOR NOVEMBER 2007

11. Summary: Embassy Freetown's outreach in November 2007 included articles surrounding A/S Frazer's attendance at the inauguration of President Koroma, newly-arrived Ambassador Perry's courtesy calls on Ministers, the opening of two new American Shelves in Freetown, and the Embassy's commemoration of Elimination of Violence against Women Day. Press coverage was robust and mostly accurate.

12. Post and Mission Activities/Press Releases:

1A. The TDY Political and Economic Affairs Officer, Curtis Stewart, participated in a two-day seminar organized by the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) on Wednesday, October 31. The objective of the seminar was to provide orientation and guidance to the newly elected parliamentarians on parliamentary proceedings. Speaking on behalf of the United States Ambassador, Mr. Stewart said the success of any democracy depends on the efficiency of the legislature. He urged parliamentarians to use the extensive powers at their disposal to improve the lot of their people. He advised them to put the needs of the people foremost during their deliberations.

The local press reported as follows:

"NCD Organizes Seminar for Parliamentarians" CONCORD TIMES 10/31
"Members of Parliament Receive Training on Governance" PREMIER NEWS 11/1

1B. On November 7, Ambassador June Carter Perry paid a courtesy call to Mr. Kemoh Sesay, Minister of Transport and Aviation. During the visit, Ambassador Perry congratulated the government and the people of Sierra Leone for organizing a successful election which, she said, was a show of political maturity and an avid determination to decide their future. She said the credibility of the elections in Sierra Leone is a model of democracy for the whole world. She said the United States government was committed to Sierra Leone's development aspirations.

The local press reported as follows:

"US Ambassador Pledges Support to Sierra Leone" AWARENESS TIMES 11/8
"America Reaffirms Commitment to Sierra Leone" PREMIER NEWS 11/8
"US Reaffirms Support to Sierra Leone" NEW VISION 11/8

1C. On November 15, Ambassador June Carter Perry paid a courtesy call to Dr. Joseph Sam Sesay, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security. Ambassador Perry used the occasion to express her government's commitment to supporting the development aspirations of the government and people of Sierra Leone. Dr. Sesay said in order to promote food production, the Ministry plans to focus on an intensive irrigation and post-harvest management scheme. He implored Ambassador Perry to muster more resources to strengthen the current aid package the U.S. government has provided to improve food production levels in Sierra Leone

The local press reported as follows:

"US Ambassador Advises on Production of Food" PEEP! MAGAZINE 11/16

1D. On November 15, the Department of State Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Dr. Jendayi Frazer, led the U.S. delegation, with Ambassador Perry to attend the inauguration ceremony of President Ernest Bai Koroma. While in Freetown, Assistant Secretary Frazer held meetings with President Koroma, senior government officials, and members of the business community. Following these meetings, the Assistant Secretary issued a statement assuring the government and people of Sierra Leone of the U.S. continued support to Sierra Leone. She stated that "we are committed to helping the Sierra Leonean people in their efforts to achieve prosperity and a bright future for themselves and future generations." She also held a radio interview with Cotton Tree News, which feeds stories to a wide variety of stations, including the UN network and community radio.

The local press reported as follows:

"US Government Assures President Koroma" CONCORD TIMES 11/20;
"US Secretary Wants Govt. to Harness Positive Momentum" AWOKO 11/20
"Top US Official Meets Ernest Koroma and Co." INDEPENDENT OBSERVER 11/20
"US Assistant Secretary Meets with President, Ministers" THE SPECTATOR 11/20
"Dr. Jendayi Frazer: US Friendship and Support for Sierra Leone will Remain Constant." KALLEONE 11/20
"Dr. Jendayi Frazer's Biography" NEW VISION 11/20
"United States Friendship with Sierra Leone will Remain Constant" PREMIER NEWS 11/20
"Departure Statement by U.S. Department of State Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Dr. Jendayi Frazer" THE NEWS 11/19
"US African Affairs Envoy Ends Tour of Duty in Salone." THE TRUMPET 11/22

Interview with A/S Frazer following the inauguration, "Cotton Tree News (CTN) Radio Station"

1E. On Wednesday, November 21, Ambassador June Carter Perry launched the American shelf program at the Fourah Bay College library. The American Shelf program allows the United States Embassy in Sierra Leone to provide books and periodicals to the University library for use by students and faculty. At the opening ceremony, Ambassador Perry said "The United States wishes to encourage American businesses and universities to Sierra Leone and to be able to guarantee that both educational institutions and businesses can work in a country that practices transparency and fully supports equal access to land and credit for women. She said the Fourah Bay College library is a symbol of the tradition of education in Sierra Leone. The Shelf at FBC is the second American Shelf in Sierra Leone, the first being at the Kissy Library in Freetown. [Note: Another American Shelf opening in Kissy held October 2007 also received wide press coverage.)

The local press reported as follows:

"American Embassy Boosts Education at FBC" PREMIER NEWS 11/22
"US Ambassador Commissions Bookshelf at FBC" CONCORD TIMES 11/23
"U.S. Embassy Donates to FBC" THE NEW CITIZEN 11/22
"American Shelf Launched at Fourah Bay College" INDEPENDENT OBSERVER 11/27
"US Embassy Boosts Education" THE TRUMPET 11/27
"American Embassy Launches 'Shelf' Project at Fourah Bay College" JUNIOR SALONE TIMES 11/27
"US Ambassador Launches American Desk at FBC College Library" THE POOL 11/27
"US Embassy Launches Shelf at Fourah Bay College Library" THE DEMOCRAT 11/27
"Ambassador Launches American Shelf at Fourah Bay College" THE NEWS 11/27
"Cotton Tree News (CTN) radio Station"
"SLBS Radio and TV Station"

1F. On Wednesday, November 28, the Public Affairs Section of the United States Embassy hosted a panel discussion to commemorate "Elimination of Violence against Women Day." The panelists included Ambassador June Carter Perry, experts from NGO 50/50 Group (an NDI honoree this year), the Lawyers Centre for Legal Assistance (LAWCLA), and Enhancing Interaction and Interface between Civil Society and the State to Improve Poor People's Lives (ENCISS). Over 30 women joined the panelists in vibrant discussions. Ambassador Perry stressed the importance of the need for the international

community to work in partnership with Sierra Leoneans to empower women. In particular, Ambassador Perry highlighted the United States Agency for International Development's programs in Sierra Leone that focus on economic development and empowerment of women and youth and the United States Government's broader initiatives to improve the status of women worldwide through the Global Fund and PEPFAR.

The Local press reported as follows:

"Press Release: American Embassy End One-Day Panel Discussion"

KALLEONE 11/30

"United States Embassy: Press Statement" SIERRA EXPRESSES MEDIA 11/30

13. KEY MEDIA STORIES

1A. On October 31, Mr. Julius Kamara, father of the late Halima Sheriff Kamara, held a press conference to express dissatisfaction with the police and the country's only pathologist, Dr. Owiz Kamara, for "improperly" handling the investigation process into the death of his daughter. Halima Sheriff Kamara, 19, was allegedly raped to death in Kenema by a Lebanese man and four Sierra Leoneans. Mr. Kamara said he was shocked to learn that all the arrested suspects, including a Lebanese diamond magnate, had been released even though a conclusive investigation had not been done. Mr. Kamara called on the government to launch a new investigation into the death of his daughter. The pathologist concluded that Ms. Kamara had died of natural causes based on his autopsy findings.

The local press reported as follows:

"My Daughter was Murdered - Father Insists" NEW CITIZEN 11/1

"Alima's Death is a Mystery... Says Father" CONCORD TIMES 11/1

"Halimatu's Death is a conspiracy" AWOKO 11/1

"Alima Struggled, Overpowered at a Guest House in Kenema - Father Tells Journalists" STANDARD TIMES 11/1

"Who Killed Alima in Kenema? Who Gave Orders to Release Basma and Co.? Surely Police has not Closed Investigations!!" AWARENESS TIMES 11/1

"Did Lebanese Man Kill Alima?" SALONE TIMES 11/1

1B. On November 1, Mr. Omrie Golley, former spokesman and legal representative of the Revolutionary United Front, who had been detained without trial for nearly two years on charges of treason and attempted assassination of former Vice President Berewa, was released. The newly appointed Attorney-General and Minister of Justice said the court had found no evidence to sustain the allegations against Mr. Golley. The Minister therefore "signed a 'nulle prosuqui' order," which effected the immediate unconditional release of Mr. Golley.

The local press reported as follows:

"Omrie Golley Set Free" NEW CITIZEN 11/2

"As Golley Walks to Freedom, He Says... "Thank God I am Alive to See this day." AWOKO 11/2

"Omrie Golley Freed" PREMIER NEWS 11/2

"Omrie Golley Freed" CONCORD TIMES 11/2

"Omrie Golley Set Free" STANDARD TIMES 11/2

"Omrie Golley Set Free from Prison" AWARENESS TIMES 11/2

"Omrie Golley Released" AFRICAN CHAMPION 11/2

"APC Frees Omrie Golley" THE NEWS 11/2

1C. On Saturday, November 3, President Koroma announced the names of new diplomatic appointees and deputy ministers. The new appointees included Mr. Bockarie Stevens, Ambassador to the United States of America, Alhaji Abdul Karim Koroma, Ambassador to the Peoples Republic of China, and Dr. Christiana Kargbo, Ambassador to the European Union. (Note: the announcements were premature and improperly issued since no agreement had been sought.)

The local press reported as follows:

"New Ambassadors Appointed" The New Citizen 11/05

"Diplomatic Appointees" The premier News 11/05

"APC Nominates 24" The News 11/05

"African Champion Boss Nominated Deputy Minister" African Champion 11/05

"Zainab's Deputy is FM Minah's Son" Awareness Times 11/05

"Deputy Ministers named" The Exclusive 11/05

"More New appointments" AWOKO 11/05

1D. On Friday, November 2, President Koroma dismissed Ombudsman Francis Gabbidon, Chairman of the National Telecom Commission Kemoh Kanji Daramy, Managing Director of the State Lottery Alhaji Ibrahim k. Cole, and Director of Financial Resources of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation Mohamed A. Sandy. It was believed that their dismissals were part of President Koroma's plan to rid key state institutions of people who overtly aligned themselves with political parties during the 2007 elections.

The local press reported as follows:

"Ombudsman, Kanji Daramy Sacked" Concord Times 11/05
"5 SLPP Big Guns Sacked" The Exclusive 11/05
"APC Sacks 8 More" Independent Observer 11/05
"Francis Gabbidon Sacked" We Yone 11/05
"Gabbidon, 7 Others Sacked" New Vision 11/05
"Ombudsman, Kanji Daramy, and Alhaji Cole Sacked!" Standard Times 11/05
"Kanji Daramy, Others Sacked" Premier News 11/05
"As Ombudsman, Three Others Sacked... President Koroma Springs Surprises" The Spark 11/05

1E. On Monday, November 5, Workers of Sierra Leone's central bank, the Bank of Sierra Leone, began a sit-down strike in protest against what they referred to as management's gross neglect of their welfare. The peaceful protesters said they were dissatisfied about the non-payment of their bonuses and the delays in the payment of their allowances. The protesting workers also demanded an investigation into certain allegedly fraudulent transactions by the previous Governor and management of the bank. The previous Governor had been dismissed by the new government.

The local press reported as follows:

"Bank of Salone Workers Strike" New Vision 11/06
"Bank of Sierra Leone Workers Down Tools" The Exclusive 11/06
"Bank of Sierra Leone Workers Go on Strike" Concord Times 11/06
"Bank Workers Demand Change of Management" New Citizen 11/06
"Strike at Bank of Sierra Leone" AWOKO 11/05
"Strike at Bank of Sierra Leone" The Democrat 11/06
"Bank Workers on Strike" The News 11/06
"Staff Demands Investigation... Rotten Generator, Fake Le 2bn Contract and More... Central Bank Governor Exposed" Standard Times 11/06
"Chaos at Bank of Sierra Leone" The Spark 11/06

1F. On Monday, November 12, The Minister of Energy and Power, Haja Hafsatu Kabba, announced Global Trading Group of Belgium as one of three winners of the bid to provide emergency power supply to Freetown. Madam Kabba said the company submitted the lowest qualified bid of US\$32,429,873, and underscored the company's experience in running power projects in several African countries.

The local press reported as follows:

"Winner of US\$32 M Electricity Supply to Freetown Announced" New Citizen 11/13
"Belgian Company to Restore Electricity in Freetown" AWOKO 11/13
"Big Fight over Electricity Contract" African Champion 11/13
"Energy Contract in Limbo" Democrat 11/13

1G. On Thursday, November 15, the official inauguration ceremony of President Koroma took place at the National Stadium in Freetown. Seven West African heads of state graced the inauguration ceremony. These included Presidents Jammeh of the Gambia, Yar A'dua of Nigeria, Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, Campaore of Burkina Faso, Wade of Senegal, Soro of Ivory Coast, Conteh of Guinea. In addition, US Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Affairs, Dr. Jendayi Frazer and Ghana's Minister of Sport and Railway, Mr. Christopher attended.

President Koroma used the occasion to call for a change of attitude among Sierra Leoneans. He pleaded with Sierra Leoneans to be open to change, to adopt a positive attitude toward one another, their work, their responsibilities, and toward the country.

The local press reported as follows:

"Regional Presidents Pledge Support" Salone Times 11/16
"Change of Attitude" New Citizen 11/16
"As Kabbah Hands over Symbol of Power... President Koroma Calls for Attitude Change" Salone Times 11/16

"A Unique Inauguration in Our Time" African Champion 11/16
 "Tejan Kabbah Congratulates Ernest Koroma in his Handing-Over Statement" Awareness Times 11/16
 "'Solo Na Bomba' 'Ernest is President'... Thousands of Sierra Leoneans Chant" The Trumpet 11/16
 "Inauguration - Tejan Kabbah Hands over Staff of Office" Premier News 11/16
 "Why SLPP Boycotted the Inauguration - SLPP Scribe Speak Out" The Exclusive 11/16
 "SLPP Boycotts APC Inauguration" Independent Observer 11/16
 "SLPP Protests Dismissal of Government Officials" Premier News 11/16
 "Why SLPP Boycotted Inauguration" The Democrat 11/16

¶H. On Monday, November 19, motorists formed long queues at filling stations because of difficulties surrounding the purchase of fuel. There was a stalemate between the government and fuel dealers regarding the prices of petroleum. Some newspapers reported that the long queues were reminiscent of the previous All Peoples Congress (APC) government when essential commodities were perpetually in short supply and caused confusion among consumers. However, the government struck a deal with fuel dealers two days later and the situation returned to normal.

The local press reported as follows:

"APC Just Two Months in Office... Toe line Returns Big Time" The Democrat 11/20
 "No Petrol Shortage... Says Trade Minister" Concord Times 11/20
 "Why the Queues Now" Premier News 11/20
 "Back to Power, Back to 'Toeline'" New Vision 11/20
 "Petrol Price to Shoot Up As Global Cost of Crude Oil Reach All-time High" Awareness Times 11/20
 "Fuel Shortage Hits Freetown" The Pool 11/20
 "Sabotage Rocketing Fuel Price Beats APC Bongo" The Trumpet 11/20
 "Over 2 Million Gallons of Petrol in Stock but... Drivers 'Toeline' for Petrol Again." AWOKO 11/20

¶I. On Saturday, November 24, a clash between police officers and pupils of the Muslim Congress School in Freetown led to injuries, the vandalism of a school building, and the burning of a police post and vehicle. The clash started when the police tried to intervene in a dispute over a piece of land. The police tried to stop the pupils from forcibly removing squatters from their school property. The situation then degenerated into violence.

The local press reported as follows:

"Police, Pupils Clash at Kissy" AWOKO 11/26
 "Truth about Muslim Congress Riot" The New Citizen 11/26
 "As Students Go on the Rampage... Police Destroy School Equipment" Salone Times 11/26
 "Muslim Congress Riot... Police Vehicle Set on Fire, 7 Injured" Sierra Express Media 11/26
 "Standoff at Muslim Congress... Police Vehicle Burnt & 45 in Police Custody" The Pool 11/26
 "Black Monday As Students Declare War against Police" The Spark 11/26
 "Police Arrest 20 Congress Students" Concord Times 11/26
 "Riot: 56 Arrested" The Exclusive 11/26

¶4. GENERAL ARTICLES ABOUT THE U.S

"Obama, Edwards Take on Clinton in Debate" PREMIER NEWS 11/1
 "CIA Chief Backs Rendition Flights" PREMIER NEWS 11/1
 "California Fire Started by Boy" INDEPENDENT OBSERVER 11/1
 "US Hands over Karbala to Iraqis" THE SPARK 11/1
 "Russia Urges US Missile 'Freeze'" THE TRUMPET 11/1
 "2 Children Die in US Raid in Afghanistan" PREMIER NEWS 11/2
 "Oprah SA School Employee Arrested" INDEPENDENT OBSERVER 11/5
 "Strike Set to Silence Talk Shows" INDEPENDENT OBSERVER 11/5
 "Man Pleads Guilty in US Base Pilot" FOR DI PEOPLE 11/2
 "US Economy Sees Surprise Growth" FOR DI PEOPLE 11/5
 "Robot Cars Race around California" PREMIER NEWS 11/6
 "Oil Hits another Record above \$97" WE YONE 11/7
 "Hillary Clinton Remains the Person to Beat" PREMIER NEWS 11/7
 "US Urges President Pervez Musharraf to Sever his Links with the Military" PREMIER NEWS 11/7
 "US Space Shuttle Leave Space Station" SALONE TIMES 11/7
 "French President Welcomed by US" PREMIER NEWS 11/8

"Mixed Results in US State Polls" PREMIER NEWS 11/9
"Bush and Sarkozy Declare Iran Aim" PREMIER NEWS 11/9
"US Appeal for Ivorian Elections" NEW VISION 11/13
"Texas Mayors Want Deeper Border" FOR DI PEOPLE 11/16
"As US Cools, World Demand Helps H.P. Outplace Rivals" PREMIER NEWS
11/21
"US Confirms Mid-East Peace Talks" THE POOL 11/22, PREMIER NEWS
11/22
"US Polygamy Sect Leader Sentenced" THE POOL 11/22;
"Trial Reveals White House Secret" THE TRUMPET 11/22
"Bush 'Involved' in CIA Leak Talk" THE TRUMPET 11/22
"Bush Spears Libby from Jail Term" THE TRUMPET 11/22
"Democrats Condemn Saudi Rape Case" 11/23
"US Fire Kills Iraq Bus Passengers" CONCORD TIMES 11/28; THE AFRICAN
CHAMPION 11/29
"Bush Urges Compromise on Mid-East" PREMIER NEWS 11/28; THE POOL
11/28; THE POOL 11/30
"Bush Calls Abass, Olmert to White House" PREMIER NEWS 11/29
"Stagehand Ends Broadway Walkout" PREMIER NEWS 11/30
"Republicans Hold You Tube Debate" AWARENESS TIMES 11/30
"President Bush attends Annapolis Peace Conference" FOR DI PEOPLE
11/30

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